

# SOFTWARE SUBMISSION PLAN





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## Software Submission Plan

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We are pleased that you have expressed an interest in submitting software for *PC: The Disk Magazine* through our Software Submission Plan.

We at Ziff-Davis Publishing Company hope, through this plan, to gain the opportunity to work with a number of companies and individuals to provide varied and exciting quality software for our subscribers.

This booklet will assist you in understanding our submission plan and in organizing your program and documentation to maximize your chance of having it published by *PC: The Disk Magazine*. Here is how you go about it:

Read the Software Submission Process section of this booklet which explains the plan. This section summarizes how the submission process works and answers many questions you may have.

Review your submission using the Program Design and Documentation Sections of this booklet. The guidelines will help you prepare programs and documentation for our evaluation.

When you feel your program is ready for consideration, then:

Complete and mail the Software Submission Agreement to the appropriate address indicated on the agreement.

Thanks again for your interest. We look forward to hearing from you and possibly welcoming you to the growing group of authors writing programs for *PC: The Disk Magazine*.



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## **Who May Participate?**

Software may be submitted by a company, by a group of authors, or by an individual author. All authors/submitters must be of legal age and reside in the United States or Canada at the time of submission. All authors must be identified in the Software Submission Agreement.

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## **What is the Software Submission Process?**

1. The author or company submitting should read this guide and the accompanying Software Submission Agreement to understand the Software Submission Plan and to determine if the software qualifies for submission.
2. The author/submitter completes the Software Submission Agreement and sends it to *PC: The Disk Magazine*. It is important to answer fully all questions in the agreement. No program code or documentation should be sent unless we later suggest that you send it.
3. The editors of *PC: The Disk Magazine* make an evaluation of the submitted information to determine whether they may wish to market it. At this time, we either indicate lack of interest in the software or suggest that you send program code and documentation to be used in a further evaluation.
4. If the software appears to have potential for inclusion in *PC: The Disk Magazine*, we will offer a Software Contract which will include such items as royalties, advances, and program and documentation changes required (if any).
5. The author/submitter completes and tests any program modifications agreed to in the Software Contract, and *PC: The Disk Magazine* conducts a formal validation of the program and documentation.
6. Ziff-Davis determines whether, when, and how to manufacture, publish, distribute, and advertise the completed software product.
7. Ziff-Davis will pay royalties semi-annually under the royalty provisions in the Software Contract.
8. The author/submitter provides maintenance for the period specified in the Software Contract.

We cannot be more specific in our suggestions, or disclose to you any of our development, planning, or marketing information, or any information regarding other programs we have received.

Software submissions may range from application systems to stand-alone programs, utilities, sub-routine libraries.



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The submitted software must be original and either operate on, or be capable of being made to operate on, the IBM Personal Computer.

PC: THE DISK MAGAZINE AND ZIFF-DAVIS CANNOT ACCEPT SUBMISSIONS ON A CONFIDENTIAL BASIS OR WHICH CONTAIN TRADE SECRETS. WE SUGGEST THAT YOU PROTECT YOUR COPYRIGHTS, PATENTS, AND ANY OTHER PROPRIETARY INTEREST TO YOUR SATISFACTION BEFORE YOU DISCLOSE YOUR COMPUTER PROGRAM TO PC: THE DISK MAGAZINE OR ZIFF-DAVIS.

Also, any questions you have relating to the legal effect of the Software Submission Agreement should be discussed with your attorney. We cannot assume any expenses associated with such discussions or with your submission.

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## **What Do I Send?**

To submit your software, complete the Software Submission Agreement contained in this binder and send only it to the address below. It is important to answer all the questions in the Agreement adequately. If you need additional pages to complete your answers, please attach them to the copy of the Agreement you send.

Mail your submission to:

PC: The Disk Magazine  
Author Submissions  
Department 732  
One Park Avenue  
New York, New York 10016

If we are interested in your software as a result of our initial evaluation, we will issue a submission authorization number and suggest that you provide us with copies of the code, sample files, and documentation on 5¼" diskettes or cassettes. If your documentation is not in magnetic media, send in a typed copy. Please do not send code or documentation until then.

Make sure each diskette or cassette is labeled with your name, the submission authorization number, the program name, and the contents. Please keep your original or a copy—we cannot return anything you send in. Also, we cannot accept printouts of programs for evaluation.

Package any documentation and diskettes or cassettes carefully so they will not be damaged during mail, and send them to the appropriate address listed above.



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**How Long  
Will the  
Submission  
Process Take?**

Our intent is to evaluate and reply to your software submissions promptly. We estimate that the process from our initial evaluation to publication will take approximately 3 to 6 months. This estimate is dependent upon a number of variable factors, and the process may take more or less time for your submission.

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**How Is  
Submitted  
Software  
Protected?**

When you initially submit your program under the Software Submission Agreement, Ziff-Davis obtains a limited license to do whatever we feel is necessary to evaluate your software, but we incur no obligation to maintain your software in confidence or as a trade secret. Your rights may be protectable under the national copyright laws and patent laws (if you own any patents pertaining to the submitted software).

If Ziff-Davis is interested in your software, we will obtain marketing and use rights from you in return for the royalties specified in the Software Contract.

We may use your name in advertising the software but are not obligated to do so. We will take reasonable steps to modify the advertising if you object to the way your name is being used.

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**How Is  
Maintenance  
Handled?**

After your software has been accepted for publication you will be expected to respond to requests to correct errors or make minor changes to improve the product for a period of time specified in the Software Contract. You will be requested to respond to program problems within five business days on a best effort basis and required to provide permanent fixes or changes within three weeks.

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**Can the Plan  
Change?**

Yes. Ziff-Davis reserves the right to change or discontinue the Software Submission Plan at any time without notice or obligation. Any changes in the plan will apply to all submissions received after the effective date of the change. Any Software Contracts in force at the time of modification will be honored.



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# Program Design

## Language

BASIC is the language built into the IBM Personal Computer and DOS (Disk-Operating System) is the operating system that most subscribers probably have. If you decide to use a language other than BASIC or any operating system other than DOS, remember that subscribers may have to purchase additional products in order to run your program. Therefore, if you are not using BASIC or DOS, you should clearly state in the Software Submission Agreement what additional software will be needed.

## Program Code

If at all possible, your program code should be structured and developed in a top-down manner. It also should be "commented" throughout. We suggest that you make your comments as complete as possible to help you in future maintenance and enhancement. For example, you probably would want to label each major section of code document names of variables and their functions, diskette file record formats, etc.

## Reliability

A reliable program should perform consistently for subscribers and must do what it claims to do. Performance claims should be accurate and supported by test data.

## Testing

You should test your program thoroughly before submitting it. To insure reliability, test your program with erroneous data and with the whole range of data it is designed to handle.

## Serviceability

You should design your program so that you can find problems and easily correct them. Enhancements and modifications that extend the program should be easy to add. Your comments and program structure will help you make these changes.

## Copyrights

Your copyright notice should appear in several places in your submission:

- One the first screen that appears.

- In memory, whenever the program is running.

- Within the first 20 lines when your program is printed

- On the external label on each diskette you submit.

## Additional Hints

Here are some additional hints to help you design your program:  
Structure your program. If possible, divide your program into modules, with each one operating as independently as possible.



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## **Additional Hints**

Design your program so that it can use both the Monochrome Display Adapter and the Color/Graphics Monitor Adapter and will check to see which monitor the user has.

Do not include CALLs to the IBM Personal Computer internal resident routines (that is, undocumented entry points or entry points currently pointed to by interrupt vectors). In short, never call a resident system routine at a hard fixed location, ROM or read/write memory. With such CALLs, your application is dependent upon particular release levels of DOS or BASIC. Use the INT instruction in both BIOS and DOS. When writing assembler language routines, use the DOS and BIOS interrupt calls when possible.

The program should not be dependent upon the manufacturing or engineering level of the hardware. Do not "initialize" any of the device adapters from within your program.

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## **Use of the Keyboard and Screen**

Consistency in the use of commands and functions of the keyboard is critical. Your program should make efficient use of the IBM Personal Computer keyboard. Especially important is using the function keys consistently; for example, use the same key for the same function on different menus.

All of your screen messages should be explicit, complete, and conversational in tone. Wording of error messages is extremely important. Users should never be chastised for making a mistake. Remember, too, that your messages should not be "cute" or humorous.

Consider including help menus and/or screens to make your program easier to use. Help menus and screens should allow users to do the work while the information is displayed. In addition, you should design your program so that advanced users can bypass help menus and screens if they wish.

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## **Hardware**

You should try to design your program so that it can serve several configurations—for example, several different display devices. The larger or more specific the configuration your program requires, the more you limit your audience.

To avoid misunderstandings, state all hardware requirements explicitly in the Software Submission Agreement and again in your documentation. In addition, distinguish between devices needed by your program and those needed by other required or supporting programs. You also should state the exact version or release level of all supporting software, such as operating systems and languages.



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# The Documentation

If we suggest that you submit your code, you should include any documentation you have to help us evaluate your software.

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## Length and Scope

The length and scope of your documentation will depend on the complexity of your program.

Regardless of the length of your user's manual, it should be complete, understandable, and easy to follow. The safest assumption is that most of your users have little or no computer experience.

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## Illustrations

To increase the effectiveness of your documentation, illustrations should accompany the written material. Adding pictures, charts, tables, and sample diagrams to your manual can help users understand exactly what you are trying to explain.

Submit clear, neat, labeled illustrations with your manuscript. They can be hand drawn. We will take care of having them professionally done.

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## Additional Information

The following are some additional rules you should keep in mind when writing:

- Do not use copyrighted materials.

- If your program depends upon or operates under or in conjunction with another software product, indicate the distributor, full program name, number, and revision level(s) for that product.

- Use examples, especially everyday ones. Remember to test each example since subscribers will probably try them first.

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## Submitted Copy of Documentation

If we suggest that you submit your documentation, it should be on a 5¼ " diskette as well as a hard copy. Please tell us the word processing program used to format your files. Should you be unable to comply with this request, we will accept the documentation in typewritten form.



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## Summary

*PC: The Disk Magazine* appreciates your interest in the Software Submission Plan and hopes that these guidelines will assist you in preparing high-quality programs and documentation for submission.





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Author Submissions  
Department 732  
One Park Avenue  
New York, New York 10016

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